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Response Paper 4

Throughout the book *White Noise* by Don DeLillo, DeLillo describes a marriage between husband and wife, Jack and Babette Gladney. Within this marriage one will witness dishonesty, infidelity, and a lot of hidden secrecy between husband and wife. In a marriage, husband and wife are supposed to be honest all the time if not most of the time, and shall be committed to his or her husband or wife, which means one shall not commit adultery. This family is full of dishonesty and some infidelity because of the fear of death and lack of ability to fully control it. Some of the secrets that are displayed in this family are hidden medical prescription for the wife, Babette; and the evaluation SIMVAC gave to Jack after the Nyodene D. toxic release.

The fear of death is one of the main problems that Jack and Babette face in their marriage. Scared of what’s to come or who will die first both use death as a reason for why they are hiding secrets. According to Jack, “he does not want to die first, but does not want Babette to die first either because of the fear of being by his self, but if he had to seriously choose a person it will be Babette.” Death is a part of life. One cannot fully control when he or she is going to die, but can possibly speed up the process or attempt to kill one self. For example in the book, Heinrich talks to Jack about his friend Orest Mercator attempt to beat the Guinness’s World Record for being locked in a cage with poisonous snakes. Mercator says the “snakes will not bit him, but if they did he know he will die quickly instead of a slow painful death. Reading the text overall, I believe the main purpose of fearing death is that one is scared of dying painful and slowly, instead quickly.

In chapter 26, Jack confronts Babette about the prescription, Dylar. Where she claims she uses Dylar because of a “condition she cannot get rid of.” In order for her to receive the medicine she slept with Mr. Gray. Within this quote Babette unleashes secrets because of her fear of death, which she claims is part of her condition, but although both Jack and Babette hide secrets from each other, they are still hurting themselves interiorly. According to Winnie Richards, Dylar has not been taken before. Which means Babette is performing as a lab guinea pig to tell whether the medicine is safe for humans or not. Being the lab guinea pig Babette is putting her health at danger because no one knows the side of effects of the Dylar and what it may do to the body if taken wrongly or taken in general. Later on in the story Jack and Babette found out Dylar is not safe for humans or other species.

In conclusion, why should one truly fear death? Is death really that terrifying? Death occurs every day whether intentionally and unintentionally. It is a part of life. A person cannot fully predict when he or she is going to die.